III.—QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

STARRED QUESTIONS.

South Zonal Council

*1 *Q.*—Sri T. PURUSHOTHAM : Will the Hon. the Chief Minister be pleased to state whether the Government propose to lay on the table of the House the copies of the official report of the proceedings of the South Zonal Council from time to time?

The Hon. Sri R. VENKATARAMAN (on behalf of the Hon. the Chief Minister) : No, Sir. As the discussions at the Southern Zonal Council relate to many inter-State problems of a delicate nature, it will not be in the public interest to disclose them, but if any major decisions affecting this State are reached, the Government will keep the Legislature informed.

Sri T. PURUSHOTHAM : Are the proceedings of the Zonal Council treated as confidential proceedings, Sir?

The Hon. Sri R. VENKATARAMAN : Yes, Sir. According to rule 15 of the Rules of Procedure of the Southern Zonal Council, the proceedings of the meetings of the Council shall, unless otherwise directed by the Chairman, be confidential.

Sri T. PURUSHOTHAM : If there is any objection to furnish copies of full proceedings, could not an official summary of the proceedings be furnished to the legislators, instead of the Members being guided by the reports in the Press?

The Hon. Sri R. VENKATARAMAN : Sir, I have already stated that these are matters of a delicate nature and that they cannot be disclosed.

Sri T. PURUSHOTHAM : Would it not be desirable to take the legislators into confidence and furnish them with copies of the reports as all the Members are vitally interested in the problems discussed at the Zonal Council meetings? As it is, we find only stray references to the happenings in the Zonal Council in the Governor's Address as in the present Governor's Address, after very long intervals?

The Hon. Sri R. VENKATARAMAN : When any decisions are taken, they will certainly be placed before the Legislature. But discussions will not be placed before the Houses of the Legislature as they might embarrass the people who participated in the discussions.

Sri MOHAMED RAZA KHAN : It was reported in the Press that during the meetings the whole atmosphere was cordial. Am I to understand that the atmosphere was cordial because you simply said ' We agree ' and dispersed without discussing at all?

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THE HON. SRI R. VENKATARAMAN : I would like to know whether 'cordial atmosphere' means what the Deputy Whip of the Opposition has said.

SRI T. P. SRINIVASAVARADAN : When the newspapers publish reports of these proceedings which are treated as confidential, could not an official summary of the proceedings be placed before the Houses of the Legislature? May I also know the reason why the Government are not prepared to place it before the Houses?

THE HON. SRI R. VENKATARAMAN : What the newspapers publish is an intelligent guess. Government cannot place before the House all the discussions because, as I said earlier, it may be embarrassing. But Government certainly do place the decisions before the Legislature and they take the House into confidence whenever decisions are taken and conclusions reached.

DR. V. K. JOHN : Are we to understand that no decisions have yet been taken by the Zonal Council?

THE HON. SRI R. VENKATARAMAN : May I know in respect of what subject?

DR. V. K. JOHN : Has no decision been taken by the Zonal Council in respect of any subject, important or unimportant?

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM : No decision worth placing before the House has been taken by the Zonal Council.

THE HON. SRI R. VENKATARAMAN : As the Hon. the Finance Minister has answered it, no decision worth placing before the House has been taken so far.

SRI MOHAMED RAZA KHAN : While appreciating the fact that it is difficult for the Government to place the proceedings of the Zonal Council before the House, may I know whether the Hon. Minister will please tell us the way in which our Ministers argued the case of the Madras Government? (Laughter.)

THE HON. SRI R. VENKATARAMAN : I thought everybody knew that the Ministers representing the Madras Government argued their case very well and it did not require that the proceedings should be placed before the House, in order to appreciate them.

DR. V. K. JOHN : May I suggest that all decisions arrived at by the Zonal Council be placed before the Legislature? Let not some decisions arrived at by the Council be considered unimportant because I take it that only on important matters decisions are taken by the Zonal Council.

THE HON. SRI R. VENKATARAMAN : Sir, it is not possible to give such a categorical assurance. The decisions relate to various matters. These will be considered and whatever the Government considers to be in the interest of the public to be placed before the Legislature or the people, they will do so.

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Sri MOHAMED RAZA KHAN : Will the Hon. Minister take the House into confidence and say what were the proposals that were accepted by the Andhra Government? At least that cannot be confidential. (Laughter.)

The Hon. Sri R. VENKATARAMAN : Government do not propose to add to the wild guessing that is already going on.

Sri A. M. ALLAPICHAI : In view of the great interest which this House is evincing, would it not be correct on the part of the Government to bring this to the notice of the Chairman of the Zonal Council, whether in view of the desire on the part of the legislators, it will be good to keep the proceedings purely and completely confidential?

The Hon. Sri R. VENKATARAMAN : Sir, I have to repeat the answer which I have already given. The Members representing the various States first considered this question and they framed the rule that they should not disclose the proceedings of the Zonal Council. If in their wisdom they thought that it was not proper to let all the States know what all discussions took place, I do not see how we can change it.

The Hon. Sri C. SUBRAMANIAM : May I supplement the answer given by my Hon. Colleague? It is only inter-State matters that are discussed in the Zonal Council and, therefore, we should not place the other States in an embarrassing situation by disclosing the information prematurely. That is the reason why we have taken the precautions in the matter and not that we do not want to take the Assembly or the Council into our confidence. Since these are essentially inter-State matters, we have to consider the inter-State propriety also in disclosing certain matters.

Registration of practitioners in modern and indigenous systems of medicine

* 2 *Q.*—Sri A. GAJAPATHY NAYAGAR : Will the Hon. the Minister for Revenue be pleased to state—

(*a*) the principles governing the registration of practitioners in modern and indigenous systems of medicine in Madras under the Indian Medical Council Act, 1956 ; and

(*b*) whether the G.C.I.M. diploma-holders are registered as practitioners in both the modern and indigenous systems of medicine?

The Hon. Sri M. A. MANICKAVELU : (*a*) The Indian Medical Council Act, 1956, has not yet come into force. At present, the Modern Medicine Practitioners are registered under the Madras Medical Registration Act, 1914, and the practitioners in indigenous systems of medicine under the rules and regulations relating to the Central Board of Indigenous Medicine.

(*b*) They are registered as " A " class practitioners and permitted to practise both modern and indigenous medicine.